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For Dwight's Journal of Music.

A LEGEND.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GRUEN.

On the top of a lofty mountain
Sate once the dear Father of all,
And measured with rapturous glances
The world that had sprung at his call.

He saw at his feet the ridges
Of mountains, a giant-train,
And forests of green, like oceans,
And harvests of golden grain.

He saw the fountains up-springing,
He breathed the fragrance of flowers,
And heard the warblers singing
In the golden morning hours.

And a quiet smile of contentment
Played over his features,—and men,
Looking up from the vale, saw a brighter
Gold on the mountain-tops then.

And long his glances of rapture
On his creation fell,
And he said: By my oath I swear it,
I have ordered all things well!

And richer perfumes of flowers
Gushed forth, as he spake the word,
And, rolling through earth and heaven,
Harmonious murmurs were heard.

There lay the world in blossom—
A smile lit the face of the Lord;
And up from the depths of His Spirit
A heavenly poem soared.

Fain was he in words to clothe it,
And write upon parchment that day
All his creative raptures
As now in his heart they lay.

But now when he beheld it
As on the leaf it stood,
A feeling came over his spirit,
Like many a poet's mood:

To picture his heart's warm throbbings
Vainly did he essay—
He could not make fairer poem
Than that which around him lay!

So he tore it in thousand pieces,
And gave to the four winds all,
And again, with rapturous glances,
Looked down on his earthly ball.

But lo! as, on the breezes,
The scraps flew to and fro,
There fell a shower of blossoms
On all the valley below!

And whoso travels on Friday,
No need of fasting has he;
And whoso travels on Sunday,
From going to mass is free.

This song have I been singing
To-day, instead of a prayer,
With Sabbath-bells everywhere ringing,
And clouds of blossoms flinging
Their snow-showers everywhere.

C. T. H.

[Continued from last week.]

Sketch of the Life of Handel.

From An Account of the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey, in 1784.

BY CHARLES BURNET, MUS. DOCT., F. R. S.

Handel having acquired by his operas at Hamburg a sum sufficient to enable him to visit Italy, set out for that seat of the Muses, a journey after which every man of genius so ardently pants. He staid some time at Florence, where he composed the opera of *Rodrigo*. From this city he went to Venice, where, in 1709, he produced his *Agrippina*, which is said by his biographer to have been received with acclamation, and to have run thirty nights. Here he met with Domenico Scarlatti, Gasparini, and Lotti.

The next place he visited was Rome, where he had an opportunity of hearing compositions and performers of the first class. Here the elder Scarlatti and Gasparini had brought vocal music to great perfection, and Corelli, instrumental. At Cardinal Ottoboni's, by whom Handel was greatly caressed and patronized, he had frequently the advantage of hearing the natural and elegant Corelli perform his own works. Here our young composer produced a serenata: *Il Trionfo del Tempo*; * after which he proceeded to Naples, where he set *Acis and Galatea*, in Italian, to music totally different from the little English drama, written by Gay, which he set in 1721, for the duke of Chandos.

When he returned to Germany, on quitting Italy, at the latter end of 1709, or the beginning of 1710, the first place at which he stopt was Hanover; where he found a munificent patron in the Elector, who afterwards, on the death of Queen Anne, ascended the English throne, by

* The original score of this work is in his Majesty's collection. In 1770, I purchased at Rome, among other manuscript compositions by old masters, six cantatas, a *voce Solo*, del Georgio Federigo Hendel, detto il Sassone, which were, probably, produced in this city during his residence there, about the year 1709: by the yellow color of the ink, they seem to have been long transcribed. Some of them I have never seen in any other collection.

the name of George the First. This prince had in his service, as maestro di capella, the elegant and learned composer, Steffani, whom Handel had met before at Venice, and who now resigned his office of maestro di capella to the Elector, in his favor. This venerable composer served him as a model for the style of chamber duets, as well as facilitated his introduction to the smiles of his patron, the Elector, who settled on him a pension of 1500 crowns, upon condition that he would return to his court, when he had completed his travels. Handel, according to this proposition, went to Dusseldorp, where he had a flattering reception from the Elector Palatine, who, likewise, wished to retain him in his service. But besides the engagement into which he had entered with the Elector of Hanover, he was impatient to visit England, where a passion for dramatic music had already manifested itself in several awkward attempts at operas, and to which place he had received invitations from several of the nobility, whom he had seen in Italy and Hanover.

It was at the latter end of the year 1710, that he arrived in England; his reception was as flattering to himself as honorable to the nation, at this time no less successful in war, than in the cultivation of the arts of peace. To the wit, poetry, literature, and science, which marked this period of our history, Handel added all the blandishments of a nervous and learned music, which he first brought hither, planted, and lived to see grow to a very flourishing state.

Of the superior talents and abilities which Handel now possessed, and of the success with which he had exercised both on the Continent, Fame, who in the character of *avant-coureur*, had wafted intelligence to this country, procured him an easy and favorable reception at court, and in many of the principal families of the kingdom. Aaron Hill, at this time manager of the opera, availing himself of his arrival, hastily sketched out the plan of a Musical Drama, from Tasso's "Jerusalem," and gave it to the Italian poet, Rossi, to work into an opera, by the name of "Rinaldo." This drama was first performed in March, 1711, and Handel is said, in the Preface, to have set it to music in a fortnight.

Mr. Addison, in the Spectator, No. 5, with his usual pleasantry, but total insensibility to superior musical excellence, mentions this circumstance among other frivolous incidents, which he means to ridicule. Had this writer and critic, so admirable in other respects, been possessed of judgment and feeling in music equal to his learning and taste in literature, he would have discovered that to compose an entire opera in less time than a copyist could transcribe it, and in a more masterly and original style than had ever before been heard in this, or perhaps, any country, was not a fair subject for sarcasm. All music seems alike to Addison, except French Recitative, for which he seems to have a particular predilection.*

The opera of *Rinaldo*, in which the celebrated Nicolini and Valentini, the first Italian singers that appeared on our stage, performed, was the delight of the nation during many years; as it was revived 1712, 1717 and 1731.

After remaining about a year in this country, and establishing a great reputation on the solid basis of the most exalted and indisputable merit,

* Spectator, No. 29.

both as a composer and performer, he returned to Hanover, on a promise made to his most powerful English friends to revisit this kingdom again, as soon as he could obtain permission of his Electoral Highness and patron. About the end of the year 1712, this permission was granted for a limited time. And we find his *Pastor Fido* and *Theseus*, in the list of Italian operas, brought on the English stage, this and the following year. And in 1715, *Amadige*, or *Amadis of Gaul*. In all these operas Nicolini, Valentini, Margarita, and Mrs. Anastasia Robinson, were the principal singers.

Not long after his second arrival in London, the peace of Utrecht having been brought to a conclusion, Handel was preferred to all others, seemingly without a murmur from native musicians, to compose the hymn of Gratitude and Triumph on the occasion. Envy, though outrageous and noisy at the success of comparative abilities, is struck dumb and blind by excess of superiority. The grand *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which he set on this occasion, were composed with such force, regularity and instrumental effects, as the English had never heard before. Purcell's *Te Deum*, in design, and expression of the words, is, perhaps, superior to all others; but in grandeur and richness of accompaniment, nothing but national partiality can deny Handel the preference. The queen settled on him for life a pension of two hundred pounds per annum. And all who had heard "Rinaldo," wished him again employed for the opera; so that the multiplicity of business, and the many protectors and friends he met with in England, a little impaired the memory of our great composer with respect to continental connections; and he seemed to think of nothing less than returning to Hanover till after the death of Queen Anne, in 1714, when his Majesty, George the First, arriving in England, saved him the trouble of a German tour.

Handel, conscious of his deficiency in respect and gratitude, to a prince who honored him with such flattering marks of approbation and bounty, durst not approach the court, till by the ingenuity and friendly interposition of Baron Kilmansegge, he was restored to favor in the following manner. The king, soon after his arrival in these kingdoms, having been prevailed on to form a party on the water, the design was communicated to Handel, who was advised to compose some pieces expressly for the occasion; the performance of which he secretly conducted in a boat, that accompanied the royal barge. Upon hearing these compositions, which have been since so well known, and so justly celebrated under the title of the "Water Music," his majesty, equally surprised and pleased by their excellence, eagerly inquired who was the author of them; when the baron acquainted the king that they were the productions of a faithful servant of his majesty, who, conscious of the cause of displeasure which he had given to so gracious a protector, durst not presume to approach his royal presence, till he had assurance that by every possible demonstration of duty and gratitude in future, he might hope to obtain a pardon. This intercession having been graciously accepted, Handel was restored to favor, and his compositions honored with the most flattering marks of royal approbation. And as a ratification of the delinquent's peace, thus easily obtained, his majesty was pleased to add a pension of two hundred pounds a year to that which had been previously conferred on him by Queen Anne; and not many years after, when he was employed to teach the young princesses, another pension of the same value was added to the former grants, by her Majesty, Queen Caroline.

From the year 1715 to 1720, I find, in the records of the Musical Drama, no new opera that was set by Handel. The first three years of this period were chiefly spent at the Earl of Burlington's, a nobleman, whose taste and judgment in the fine arts were as exquisite as his patronage to their votaries was liberal. And during the other two years, Handel seems to have been employed at Cannons, as maestro di capella to the Duke of Chandos; who, among other splendid and princely kinds of magnificence, established a chapel, in which the cathedral service was daily performed

by a choir of voices and instruments, superior, at that time, perhaps, in number and excellence, to that of any sovereign prince in Europe. Here Handel produced, besides his anthems, the chief part of his hautbois concertos, sonatas, lessons, and organ fugues; which are all so masterly, spirited and exquisite in their several kinds, that if he had never composed an opera, oratorio, *Te Deum*, duet, cantata, or any other species of vocal music, his name would have been had in reverence by true musicians, as long as the characters in which they are written should continue to be legible.

We come now to the busiest and most glorious period of Handel's life; who, arrived at that stage of existence which Dante calls

Il mezzo del cammin di nostra vita:

when the human frame and faculties have acquired their utmost strength and vigor, was endowed with great natural powers, highly improved by cultivation; with a hand which no difficulties could embarrass; a genius for composition unbounded; at the head of a profession which facilitates access to the great, and, with extraordinary abilities, ensures their patronage; high in the favor of the sovereign, nobles, and public, of a great and powerful nation, at a period of its greatest and happiest tranquility; when it was not only blest with leisure and zeal to cultivate the arts of peace, but with power, liberally to reward those whose successful efforts had carried them beyond the bounds of mediocrity.

Such were Handel's circumstances and situation, when a plan was formed, by the English nobility and gentry, for establishing a fund for the support of Italian operas, of which he was to be the composer and director; and, as his Majesty King George the First was pleased to subscribe one thousand pounds towards the execution of this design, and to let his name appear at the head of the subscription, amounting to fifty thousand pounds, this society was called the Royal Academy.

When Handel quitted his employment at Cannons, he was commissioned by this academy to go to Dresden, in order to engage singers. Here he found Senesino, Durastanti, Berenstadt, and Boschi, whom he brought over to England.

Though the principal intention, in forming the academy, was to appoint Handel the composer and director of the band; the public was not, as yet, unanimous in supporting this measure. Bononcini and Attilio had been invited over by the former managers of the opera; and as they were composers of acknowledged merit, there was an unwillingness in their admirers and friends to consent to their dismissal. And it was now that those musical feuds began, of which Swift has perpetuated the memory, by an epigram, which throws contempt upon an art, and upon artists, whose merit he never felt or understood, though he could see the ridicule of their situation. But the satirist who discovers no difference between a Dryden and a bell-man, or a Raphael and a house-painter, is full as well qualified to talk about poetry and painting, as he about music, who neither sees nor hears the difference between the productions of a Handel or a Bononcini, and those of the most despicable fiddler.

No art, science, or even religious or moral truth, can parry the assaults of ridicule, when wit and humor guide the thrust; though, luckily, the wounds inflicted are slight, and cure themselves. For neither lovers of art, nor of religion and virtue, can be long diverted from their pursuits, by a gibe or *bon mot*. A great nation, in which there are so many opulent individuals, wants innocent amusements for their leisure hours, when quitting the chase and rural sports they are assembled together in the capital; and in the best and most polished ages of the world, the cultivation and patronage of music have employed the talents and munificence of its most distinguished inhabitants.

Musical dramas or operas, which during the last century travelled from Italy to France, and from France to England, were never attempted in the Italian language till the reign of Queen Anne, when the first essays were made by per-

formers, partly natives, and partly Italians, who severally used their own dialect: the absurdity of which Addison has ridiculed with great humor and pleasantry in the Spectator, No. 18.* But as the love for operas was then, and has been ever since, most powerfully excited in such of our nobility and gentry as have visited Italy in their youth, it is natural that they should at all times wish to have these exhibitions as near the models with which they have been acquainted on the continent, as possible. And of such we may suppose the Royal Academy was composed: as the Duke of Newcastle, was governor; Lord Bingley, deputy-governor; and the Dukes of Portland and Queensbury, Earls of Burlington, Stair and Waldegrave, Lords Chetwynd and Stanhope, James Bruce, Esq., Colonel Blathwait, Thomas Coke, of Norfolk, Esq., Conyers D'Arcy, Esq., Brigadier-General Dormer, Bryan Fairfax, Esq., Colonel O'Hara, George Harrison, Esq., Brigadier-General Hunter, William Pulteney, Esq., Sir John Vanbrugh, Major-General Wade, and Francis Whitworth, Esq., directors.

These great and eminent personages could not, however, get the whole management of the operas into their own hands, all at once: oppositions are no less frequent, than furious, in popular governments; and, on this occasion, political animosities were blended with musical faction. All the friends of Bononcini and Attilio were not, perhaps, entirely guided by the love of music, and sense of their superiority; the love of power, and hatred of the abettors of Handel, for party considerations, furnished fuel to their zeal; and Handel, ere they gave way, was forced to mount the stage, and fight his own battle. For all that his friends could obtain of those that were in possession of the theatre in the Haymarket, at his return from Dresden, with auxiliaries, was permission to have his opera of *Radamistus* performed there in 1720.† On this occasion, the expectations which the public had formed of the abilities of Handel, from his great reputation, and the specimens he had already given, may be estimated by the crowds which assembled at the opera-house doors, when there was no longer any room for their admission. And the applause of those who were so fortunate as to obtain places, evinced the full gratification of the delight they expected to receive. This opera, however, with all its merit and success, did not obtain for Handel a victory sufficiently decisive, to oblige the enemy to quit the field.

After this, as the last experiment, it was agreed by the friends of the three several rivals, that each of them should compose an act of the same opera, with an overture to each act. The drama fixed upon was *Mutius Scaevola*, of which Bononcini set the first act, Attilio the second, and Handel the third; and this fiery trial determined the point of precedence between him and his competitors: the act in *Mutius Scaevola*, which Handel composed, being pronounced superior to both the others, and Bononcini's the next in merit.

It was the more honorable to our great musician to have vanquished such a champion as Bononcini, as he was a man of great abilities, and very high in reputation all over Europe. Few, indeed, are able, when the difference is doubtful, to discriminate and set a just value on the nicer shades of excellence: a grain of partiality or prejudice can turn the scale of either side, when in the hands of the best judges; but how shall ignorance dare to determine, what learning and experience can scarce discern?

The truth is, that Bononcini's peculiar merit in setting Italian words seems to have been out of the reach of an English audience, and that Italians alone were competent to judge of it; who say, that his knowledge in singing and in their language was such as rendered his *cantilena*, or melody, more natural and elegant to vocal performers, and his *recitatives* more passionate, and

* The Germans, according to Riccoboni, at the beginning of this century, had operas performed in the same manner: the Recitative being pronounced in German, and the Airs in Italian.

† This opera, under the title of "Zenobia," was translated into German, by Mattheson, and performed to Handel's music, in Hamburg, 1721.

expressive of nicer sensations and inflexions, to every hearer accustomed to the tones of Italian speech, than those of his rival; but in majesty, grandeur, force, fire, and invention, which are not local beauties, but striking and intelligible in all countries, Handel was infinitely his superior.

From this memorable victory, in 1721, the Royal Academy seems to have been firmly established during the space of eight or nine years, under the management of Handel's most powerful friends and greatest admirers; who, in appointing him the principal composer, gave him absolute dominion over the performers.*

There were, however, from time to time, several operas of Bononcini and Attilio exhibited during this period, on the same stage, and by the same performers, as those of Handel; perhaps to conciliate parties: the lovers of music are sometimes froward, capricious, and unreasonable, as well as the professors. This was never more conspicuous to by-standers, than in the violence of party for the two singers, Cuzzoni and Faustina, in the year 1727; at which time, though both were excellent performers, in different styles, yet so unwilling was the English public to be pleased with both, that when the admirers of one of these sirens began to applaud, those of the other were sure to hiss. It seems as impossible for two singers of equal merit to tread the same stage, *a parte eguale*, as for two people to ride on the same horse, without one being behind.

"If the frequenters of Musical Dramas had not then been enemies to their own pleasure, the merit of these singers consisted of excellencies so different and distinct, that they might have applauded each by turns, and, from their several perfections, by turns, have received equal delight.

"Unluckily for moderate people, who seek pleasure from talents wherever they can be found, the violence of these feuds has cured all succeeding managers of the extravagance of engaging two singers of the same sex, at a time, of disputable abilities."†

Dr. Arbuthnot, on occasion of the contested rights of supremacy between these theatrical principals and their adherents, published 1728, a *Manifesto*, entitled, "The Devil to pay at St. James's: or a full and true account of a most horrid and bloody battle between Madame Faustina and Madame Cuzzoni. Also a hot skirmish between Signor Boschi and Signor Palmerini. Moreover, how Senesino has taken snuff, is going to leave the opera, and sing psalms at Henley's Oratory."‡

A few years after, a quarrel happened between Handel and Senesino, which broke up the Academy, and was not only injurious to the fortune of our great composer, but the cause of infinite trouble and vexation to him, during the rest of his life.

Dr. Arbuthnot, who was always a very zealous and active friend to Handel, entered the list, as his champion, whenever an opportunity offered of defending his cause. And, as ridicule supplied him with all kinds of ammunition, and the pen was his most irresistible weapon, he had recourse to these in the contention with Senesino, who had almost all the great barons of the realm for his allies. And in this second *puny* war, after mutual complaints of treaties violated, rights infringed, and hostilities committed, he published another *Manifesto*, which had for title, "Harmony in an uproar: a Letter to George Frederick Handel, Esq., master of the Opera House in the Haymarket, from Hurlothrumbo Johnson, Esq., composer extraordinary to all the theatres in Great Britain, excepting that of the Haymarket. In which the rights and merits of both Operas are properly considered."

A court is instituted in this pamphlet for the trial of Handel, who is ordered to hold up his hand, and to answer to the following several high

* During this prosperous period, after *Radamisto*, and *Muzio Scevola*, Handel produced his operas of *Ottone*, *Floridante*, *Flavio*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano*, *Rodelinda*, *Scipione*, *Alessandro*, *Ricardo primo*, *Amleto*, *Siroe*, *Tolomeo*, *Lotario*, *Partenope* and *Porco*.

† Journal of a Musical Tour through Germany, &c., vol. ii, p. 189.

‡ Arbuthnot's *Miscellanies*, vol. i, from p. 213 to 216.

crimes and misdemeanors committed upon the wills and understandings of the people of this country.

Imprimis, he is charged with having bewitched us for the space of twenty years past.

Secondly, with most insolently daring to give us good music and sound harmony, when we wanted bad.

Thirdly, with most feloniously and arrogantly assuming to himself an uncontrolled power of pleasing us whether we would or no; and with often being so bold as to charm us, when we were positively resolved to be out of humor.

Dr. *Pushpin* and Dr. *Blue*, (Pepusch and Green), accuse him of not being a graduate in either of the universities; and the former of not having read Euclid, or studied the Greek moles. Others of having composed such music as not only puzzled our parish clerks and threw out every congregation, but such as never man produced before. Then, as an instance of his having practiced sorcery in this kingdom on his majesty's liege subjects, and of bewitching every sense we have, it is asserted that there was not a letter in any one of his public bills but had magic in it; and that if at any time a squeak of one of his fiddles, or a tooting of one of his pipes was to be heard, away danced the whole town, helter skelter, crowding, pressing, and shoving; and happy were they who could be squeezed to death. And at length the court concludes, that "as one Opera is such an enormous source of expense, luxury, idleness, sloth and effeminacy, there could be no way so proper to redress these grievances, as the setting up another."

The only parts of this ironical letter which seem to be serious are printed in Italics, and contain Handel's own defence: who, in answer to the crimes with which he was charged by his opponents is made to say, "that he was no way to blame in the whole affair; but that when Senesino had declared he would leave England, he thought himself obliged in honor to proceed with his contract, and provide for himself elsewhere; that as for Cuzzoni, he had no thought of her, no hopes of her, nor any want of her, Strada being in all respects infinitely superior, in any excellency required for the stage; and as for singers in the under parts, he had provided the best set we ever had yet; though basely deserted by Montagnana, after having signed a formal contract to serve him the whole of this season; which he might still force him to do were he not more afraid of Westminster Hall than ten thousand D—rs, or ten thousand D—ls. That as he was obliged to carry on operas this winter, he imagined he might be at liberty to proceed in the business in that manner which would prove most to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced part of the nobility and gentry, and his own interest and honor." He afterwards adds, "that it was impossible for him to comply with the unreasonable and savage proposals made to him; by which he was to give up all contracts, promises, nay risk his fortune, to gratify fantastical whims and unjust piques." And continues to plead his own cause, by saying, "that if he was misled, or had judged wrong at any time in raising the price of his tickets, he was sufficiently punished, without carrying resentment on that account to such a length.* But in whatever light the entertainment was considered, it certainly better merited such an extravagant price, than any other ever yet exhibited in this nation."

In another part of this pamphlet, a partizan for Handel, captivated by the vocal powers of Carestini, whom he had brought over in order to supersede Senesino, accosts Hurlothrumbo in the following manner: "So, Sir, I hear you are a great stickler for the Opera at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; a pretty set of singers, truly! and for composers, you out-do the world!—Don't you think, says he, at this time of life, Senesino could

* Besides the offence given to the subscribers of the Royal Academy, by refusing to compose for, or even employ Senesino, the great favorite of the nation, Handel disobliged them extremely, not only by raising the price of admission to a Guinea, but by refusing to let them occupy their particular boxes in the Haymarket theatre, when he performed there his oratorio of "Esther," in the summer of 1732.

twang a prayer finely through the nose in petticoats at a conventicle? Hah!—Or, what think you, says he, of Signora Celesti snuffling a hymn there in concert; or, Madame Bertolli, with her unmeaning voice, with as little force in it as a pair of Smith's bellows with twenty holes in the sides: Your base, indeed* makes a humming noise, and could roar to some purpose, if he had songs proper for him: as for your Signora Fagotto† she, indeed, may, with her master, be sent home to school again; and by the time she is fourscore, she'll prove a vast addition to a bonfire; or make a fine Duenna in a Spanish opera.

"Your composers too have behaved notably truly; your Porpoise‡ says he, may roll and rumble about as he pleases, and prelude to a storm of his own raising; but you should let him know, that a bad imitation always wants the air and spirit of an original, and that there is a wide difference betwixt full harmony, and making a noise.—I know your expectations are very high from the performance of the king of Arragon;§ but that Trolly Colly composer, a stupid cantata-thrummer, must make a mighty poor figure in an opera; though he was so nice last winter, that he would not allow that Handel could compose, or Senesino sing: what art he has used, to produce him now as the first voice in Europe, I cannot imagine; but you must not depend upon his majesty too far; for to my knowledge, he has been engaged by a formal deputation from the general assembly of North Britain, to new-set their Scotch Psalms, and to be clerk to the high-kirk in Edinburgh, with a salary of one hundred pounds Scots, per annum."

This letter, dated February 12, 1733, was published in a shilling pamphlet, and occupies twenty-four pages in the second volume of Arbuthnot's *Miscellanies*. Some of the irony and humor is well pointed, and much of the musical politics of the day may be gathered from its perusal. As here, we see who sided with the nobility, when they set up an opera against Handel in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and engaged Porpora and Arrigoni to compose, and placed Senesino and Segatti, till the arrival of Cuzzoni, at the head of the singers. It appears here, likewise, that Montagnana, the celebrated base-singer, Celeste, and Bertolli, two of Handel's female performers, as well as Arrigoni, the lutenist, with Rolli (Rowley Powley) the Italian opera poet, had deserted from his standard; and that Dr. Pepusch, Dr. Green, and Holcombe (Mr. Honeycomb), were on the side of the opponents; while Carestini, Strada, the Negri family, Durastanti and Scalzi, were at the head of his own troop.

[To be continued.]

La Traviata.

(From the Courier, of Wednesday.)

The recent compositions of Mr. Verdi afford a remarkable example of what might be called the "Art of Sinking in Music," to which not even Martinus Scriblerus's "Art of Sinking in Poetry" can offer a parallel. Each of the last four or five operas he has given to the world has been considerably inferior to that immediately preceding it, and it now becomes a matter for anxious consideration what we are to expect in his next lyrical production, should he continue in this manner. It can hardly be anything better than a series of brilliant and somewhat noisy quadrilles, polkas and waltzes, for ponderous orchestra, with weak vocal accompaniments. The tender cantabiles and plaintive minor andantes, which have for sometime been gradually growing more and more feeble, will probably have died out altogether, the composer's resources in that line being already well-nigh exhausted. Indeed, while listening to the *Traviata* one's first thought is,—what a beautiful writer of quadrilles was lost to the world when Mr. Verdi devoted himself to the manufacture of operas. But then we remember *Ernani*, *Nabuccodonosor*, and other of his earlier works—produced when his genius was in its first flush, and which may claim an eminent position among modern operas; full of fine free melody, and revealing a wonderful

* Montagnana.

† Segatti, the first woman in the opera established by the nobility in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, till the second arrival of Cuzzoni.

‡ Porpora.

§ Arrigoni, the Lutenist.

mastery of dramatic effect—and only regret that in his later works he should have so permitted the exaggerations and defects of his style to over-master the many admirable qualities perceptible in his first creations. That the *Traviata* is more deficient in science and imagination than anything he has previously written cannot be denied.

The story of *Traviata* is taken from Dumas' *Dame aux Camelias* and is essentially the same as that of "Camille." The names of the characters are changed, and the time is put back as far as 1700. And, by the way, in the representation last Monday night at the Boston Theatre, the costumes of the male characters were of the last century, while those of the females were of last week. The main incidents of the play are presented, stitched together with a thread of recitative after the usual fashion of librettos. In the first act occurs the party at Violetta's house, where the hero and heroine meet. In the second, the lovers are found in their country mansion, and Violetta is induced to desert Alfred by the entreaties of his father; then comes the scene in the ball-room, with which the act closes. In the third and last act are represented the reconciliation of the lovers and the death of Violetta. Of course the dramatic connection is destroyed by the necessity of bringing all these events within the smallest possible compass.

Like most of Verdi's operas, the *Traviata* has no overture, but opens with a short prelude of some fifty bars, in which there is nothing interesting or original. At the commencement of the first act we have a brisk chorus, &c., in a major, eminently suited to quadrille purposes, but not otherwise valuable. Next comes a *brindisi*—drinking song—in which Alfred and Violetta take the principal parts, and in the chorus of which all present join. This morceau is one of the few genuine melodies in the opera, and is peculiarly appropriate and effective. The waltz movement which follows has nothing whatever to recommend it, nor has the little duet between Alfred and Violetta, the principal phrase of which, introduced in various portions of the opera, is borrowed from Meyerbeer's "Robert." The leading ideas of Violetta's scene and air which close the first act may easily be traced to some of the composer's previous works.

The second act opens with a long scene and air for Alfred, which is somewhat effective, although marked by no particular originality. The whole of this is omitted in the representation at the Boston Theatre. A duet follows between Violetta and the father of Alfred, in which the latter gives vent to his sorrow in an easy air in A flat. This is the same cantabile that has appeared, slightly varied, in all the operas of Mr. Verdi, since the "Infelice" of *Ernani*. A considerable portion of this duet which is very long, is judiciously omitted, as it presents little that is agreeable. A short and uninteresting duet between Violetta and Alfred is omitted, and the scene closes with an indifferent air by Alfred's father, which, although in an altered tempo, bears a most unpleasant resemblance to the well known piece of music by Reissiger, commonly known as "Weber's Last Waltz." The allegro of this air is cut—unfortunately, as it is one of the best in the opera.

The finale of the second act—the scene of the ball and the game at cards—offers some fine opportunities for musical treatment, which, however, Mr. Verdi has not very ably improved. We have first a chorus of gipsy fortune-tellers, who accompany their singing with blows on the Tambour de basque. The chorus is piquant and pleasing. A chorus of Spanish matadors succeeds, who, as they shout in unison, batter the ground with their staffs—a remarkable evidence of the fertility of Mr. Verdi's invention, who, it appears, was resolved not to stop at anvils. In this chorus occurs a most unkind plagiarism; an old familiar nursery tune is forced into service, and seems mightily out of place;—possibly, however, it may be an unconscious imitation; who can tell? The long scene of the card playing, &c., is perhaps the weakest of all, containing nothing worth notice but a little dramatic phrase of four or five bars sung by Violetta. But the concluding movement, by all the characters, is undoubtedly the most powerful and effective in the opera.

The last act opens with a reminiscence of the introduction, leading to a very ordinary air by Violetta. Then comes in a bit of a Bacchanal chorus, behind the scenes, to which succeeds a duet between the reconciled lovers. The andante is a palpable imitation of the final duet in *Trovatore*, but quite effective, particularly towards the close. The allegro also is much better than the greater part of the music. Next comes a movement modelled upon the "Miscere" in *Trovatore*, but by no means equal to it. The concluding bars of the *Traviata* do not rise above the general inferiority of the opera; and the last tones of

Violetta, long, loud and piercing, seem sadly inappropriate.

La Traviata was first performed in Venice, March 6, 1853, with moderate success. In Paris and London it has met with great favor, but on this side the water it does not appear to have gained much popularity.

American Music Association.

(From Willis's "Musical World," June 6.)

The "New York American-Music Association"—the very long name of a national art-infant of short life, as yet—gave its final concert for the season last week.

The following programme was presented to a very numerous audience at DeLorworth's saloon:—

- PART I.
- 1—Kyrie Eleison, from Mass in D..... Dr. R. F. Halsted
Mrs. Crump, Mr. Johnson and Chorus.
 - 2—Piano Solo: Souvenirs d'Andalousie. Caprice de Concert, on Spanish Airs..... Gottschalk
Mr. Candido Berti.
 - 3—Ave Maria..... W. A. King
Miss Henrietta Simon.
 - 4—Grand Scena ed Aria..... A. Reiff, Jr.
Dr. Charles Guilmette.
 - 5—Fantaisie for Violin, on Norma..... Appy
Mr. Henry Appy.
 - 6—Song: "Come, love, with me,"..... J. A. Johnson
Mr. J. A. Johnson.
 - 7—Hymn 186 (Bk. Com. Prayer), Soprano Solo and Chorus, Jerome
Miss Henrietta Simon and Chorus.
- PART II.
- 8—Hymn to the Virgin..... J. M. Deems
Mrs. Crump, Mr. Johnson and Chorus.
 - 9—Fantaisie sur "Lucresia" and "Lucia," on the Boehm Flute..... Siede
Mr. F. J. Eben.
 - 10—Song..... W. H. Walter
Mr. J. A. Johnson.
 - 11—Duet, from Opera "Esther,"..... J. M. Deems
Miss Henrietta Simon and Dr. Guilmette.
- Conductor at the Piano,..... Mr. Wm. A. King.
Conductor of Chorus,..... Dr. Charles Guilmette.

At our request, the obliging President of the Association, Mr. Charles J. Hopkins, furnished us with a few personal statistics of the composers whose names appear on the programme, which will be interesting to those who are interested in persons and things mainly Native-American.

Dr. R. F. Halsted is a New York physician—plays the organ in Church of the Holy Apostles—Native-American—was never abroad.

His "Kyrie" indicates fine musical feeling and a refined and cultivated taste. It is somewhat over-spiced with dissonance, however; the flat-sixth, particularly, in its various harmonic combinations, being over-used, and over-prominent. Dr. Halsted will soon, doubtless, fall into a more diatonic style of writing.

The biography of New Orleans Gottschalk, of national culture and European career, we need not here write. We were sorry to read the latest news of him, from Havana, that his consumptive symptoms have not been modified by his voyage. We trust, nevertheless, that his may be one of those cases of pulmonary delusion, which seem to outlive and outlast our worst fears. We have known several such of late years. His "Caprice" is one of his lighter compositions, and was gracefully played by young Berti.

Berti is one of the promising *might-bes* of art, who is giving the enthusiasm to law-study which he formerly applied to music. Meantime, however, he avails himself, as any young enterprising man would, of the pecuniary advantage which his musical accomplishment affords him to help him on in the expense of student-life; and we cordially recommend him to such private families and schools as would like to secure a high-bred, gentlemanly-mannered and very capable teacher.

Wm. A. King, English born and bred, although of almost purely American career, we can write but little about that is not already popularly known. His talent for organ-playing, in which his musical many-mindedness is chiefly brought into play, is now unapplied—Mr. King, in common with many artists, being averse to making Sunday the most laborious and business-day of the week, and wishing a seventh of the time, at least, to himself. We think that Mr. King does his best things when he is not aware of it. We happened in at Grace Church one sleepy, sum-merly afternoon, some years since, and heard him play an introductory voluntary to about a dozen

people, which, put fairly into notes, would suffice to make the reputation of any man. The moment he takes pen in hand, the afflatus, to our thinking, very much subsides—he becomes more critical and less himself.

Of "A. Reiff, jr." we have obtained no information. His "Grand Scena ed Aria" we could not get into the significance of, despite Dr. Guilmette's painstaking rendering.

Mr. Appy was so un-appy as to be detained at Philadelphia; Mr. Eben, the flutist, falling into his place with the flute-solo, later announced. Mr. Eben plays a most resonant and pure-toned Boehm flute, which he well understands witching the music out of. Mr. Eben is of German birth and education.

Mr. Johnson is music-director at Dr. Muhlenberg's church, an American, a teacher in the common schools and an efficient and zealous musician. We have heard better things of his than the song he sang.

"Jerome" (*not* Bonaparte, but Charles Jerome Hopkins, presumptively) is the President of the society; or, rather, he is Vice-President, Financier, all the Directors, Agent, and almost Door-keeper and Type-setter of the programmes—in short, he is the Society itself. He started it, keeps it in a state of active vitality, lives in it and for it, in very close sense is engaged to it, and one of these days, for aught we see to prevent, will marry it.

"Jerome" is a young man in whom, we believe, have always been contending two antagonistic biases,—Chemistry and Music. We believe his chemical prowess, particularly in enterprising experiment, showed itself before his musical. We advised him, some time since, to strike the flag of his inclinations to chemistry; but he would not heed us.

The 186th Hymn of his composition, we think, on the whole, the best thing we have heard from Jerome, although composed, we understand, before he was instructed in harmony. Out of his family, Jerome has received but little instruction in music, and that little from T. E. Miguel (who died a few weeks ago in the greatest penury). He is organist of St. John's church, at Yonkers, plays the viola, trombone and violoncello, and is son of the distinguished Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont: in consideration of whose late celebrated work, "The End of Controversy Controverted," we must be permitted to express our surprise, that his son should assume to himself any such questionable name as Je-Rome. His real name is C. J. (not Church Journal—that is his brother)—Charles J. Hopkins.

J. M. Deems is a Virginian; studied we believe, abroad, is a teacher, lives in Charlottesville, is a cornet-player, has composed and scored an opera and oratorio, and is a member of the N. Y. Musical Fund Society. His "Hymn to the Virgin" and Duet from "Esther," show decided ability. We should say his talent were as well worth cultivating as that of any composer on the programme.

W. H. Walter is a New Yorker, a pupil of Dr. Hodges, is organist of Trinity chapel and teaches the organ and harmony. Judging by this "Song," his ability lies far more in the sacred than the secular style.

Other names which have appeared on the Association programmes from time to time, are Dr. Hodges, Bristow, Fry, Curtis, Mason, Psychowski, Homman and Willis; severally and all of whom, we threaten to inform the public more personally about, should they ever appear again on an Association programme—unless they particularly intercede with us to the contrary.

From my Diary, No. 5.

"A mint of schemes within his brain."

Shakespeare, (adapted.)

JUNE 10.—The last new scheme is musical, and shall be recorded.

Julius Stern was a rising young musician in Berlin. He travelled. He spent some years in Paris, and gained reputation. At length he returned to Berlin, established himself as a teacher of music, and like Carl Fasch, of the last generation, organized a Sing-

ing Society, which goes by the name of the "Sternsche Gesang Verein," and of which the Loewe, now Frau Leo—so capitably described by Chorley in his book of Rambles—is a leading feminine member. This society has become a rival of the great Sing Akademie, so excellent are its performances.

Summer before last another society, one of instrumental performers, was organized, with Stern at the head, and in the winter of 1855-6 the "Gesang" and "Orchester" Societies united in giving a series of concerts. These concerts rank among the best I have ever attended, and now, on turning over the file of the daily paper which I took that winter in Berlin, and seeing the programmes scattered along its pages, and being thus reminded of the great pleasure and benefit I derived from the performances, the mint within my brain has coined a new scheme.

THE SCHEME

Proposes ten grand miscellaneous concerts, on alternate Saturday evenings, to be given by an orchestra of at least seventy performers, and a chorus of one hundred and fifty to two hundred voices, and four grand performances of Oratorio, to be given in the style of the Festival. The smaller chorus is to be made up of so many members of the grand chorus as can be at liberty for rehearsals and performances upon Saturday evenings. The secular concerts are to open each, with a Symphony, and this followed by some instrumental Solo, will make the first part of the programme. The second part will be made up of instrumental and vocal music. Here is a specimen programme:

PART I.
Symphony in D..... Beethoven.
Concert Stueck..... Weber.

PART II.
Overture—Melusine..... Mendelssohn.
The Tempest..... Haydn.
Scene from Seasons..... Haydn.
Overture—Tell..... Rossini.

The "Tempest" is a piece for orchestra and chorus, which Haydn records in his Diary as being his first attempt at setting English words to music. I wish people could have an opportunity of hearing how exquisitely beautiful and how grand it is.

Well, to fill up the ten concerts, the scheme proposes to give Mendelssohn's Walpurgis Night music, his fragments: "Loreley" and "Christus," his Summer-night's Dream, his *Lobgesang*. From Beethoven, the "Ruins of Athens" music, with its queer but most effective Turkish march and chorus, the "Calm at Sea and Prosperous Voyage," (chorus and orchestra), his "Ah, perfido!" (Recitative and air), and the Fantasia, for piano-forte, orchestra and chorus. If possible, the schemer will engage the boys of the Choristers' School, and give Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus*, and Allegro's *Miserere*. On another occasion a selection from Gluck's "Orpheus," with Miss Phillips. Why, there is music enough! to say nothing of four or five grand old English Gleees by two hundred voices, without accompaniment—Webbe's "When winds breath soft," or Calcott's (?) "Queen of the Valley," for example—or a scene or two from "The Scarlet Letter."

The scheme moreover embraces the engagement of two or three of England's best singers, both for the miscellaneous and the grand Oratorio Concerts. "For farther particulars, see small bills."

But stop, a moment! The schemer has forgotten to count the cost, while he has taken it for granted that Boston is a musical Athens, that will be so eager to embrace the opportunity of attending such a series of concerts, as to put doorkeepers in danger of life and limb!

Let us pause for reflection.

Boston people pay a dollar to Thalberg, for an hour of finger gymnastics, of an evening. They pay a dollar for two hours of "Traviata," with a chorus of twenty persons, an orchestra rather larger, and three or four middling singers. They pay three, four, five dollars for an hour of Jenny Lind, and another hour of Goldschmidt—which bores the audience. But for Oratorio, with 500 voices and 78 instruments, a dollar is too much! If the schemer can put his tickets at half a dollar, why, they will see about it. So will the schemer.

1st.—The schemer must provide orchestra of seventy persons. This, with conductor, may be safely set down at \$400 per night, making over \$5,000, to say nothing of the expense of the rehearsals, for which every man must also be paid. I judge that the instrumental music alone, for the fourteen concerts, would cost \$10,000.

2d.—Think of the expense, Mr. Schemer, you will incur, in the purchase and copying of music alone! This will amount to a sum which will require at least three figures to express it.

3d.—There is the cost of hall, fuel and lights.

4th.—Of printing, advertising, and the making up of illustrative and historic programmes.

5th.—The solo talent to be engaged abroad, or at home, as the case may be, and which will count up by thousands of dollars.

Nothing can be clearer than that at fifty cents a ticket, the outlay in money, to say nothing of the time and labor of three to five hundred persons, in preparing for the performances, cannot be covered, even though every seat in the Music Hall should be paid for beforehand.

It is just possible that, at one dollar for a single ticket, and tickets for the course, (transferable), at the rate of three tickets for two dollars per concert, the expenses might be covered. Twenty-one hundred tickets at this rate, for secured seats, would amount to \$1400 per night, and this would leave some four or five hundred spare places, to be sold at each concert.

Now, Jenny Lind, Thalberg, and such performers, carry off thousands upon thousands of dollars profits, and nobody seems to grudge the money; but the schemer has no thought of profit. He asks only to have his expenses covered. Of course all the musical public stands ready for this.

"By the Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant; a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation; an excellent plot, very good friends."

A good scheme, a capital scheme, and nothing now is wanting to carry it out but—an orchestra, the Handel and Haydn Society, good soloists, vocal and instrumental, and a paying subscription—of some two thousand dollars per night.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JUNE 13, 1857.

ITALIAN OPERA.—The players are come! The gay troupe pitched their tent on Monday for a few nights at the Boston Theatre, and began forthwith to set their dazzling stock of latest fashions before the eyes of an admiring crowd. First they unrolled—the reigning fashion everywhere—the new Verdi patterns, with their "stunning" colors and the unmistakable *prononcés* figures. The last, and of course the first unrolled, is called the "Traviata." Verily the figures, the musical ideas, motives, rhythms, forms, were unmistakable, as indeed the entire general texture and groundwork. It was Verdi reproducing, or rather redigesting, Verdi; his own common-places recombined, with loss of the original freshness; his old effects tried over and over again, as if with a nightmare inability to move beyond them. Nowhere, in one single point, of song or instrumentation, does this opera add a tittle to what we all knew of Verdi. Invention seems exhausted, and only an intense craving for production left. There is nothing in it which we have not heard essentially before either in *Ernani*, or in *Trovatore*, or in some of the works that came between; and they are not those habits of the mind, those characteristic plays of fancy, those traits of identity in style, which never wear out, as in the case of greater geniuses. If

here and there he makes a wilder effort to escape himself, the result is an unconscious, feeble snatching of some well-known theme by others. These marks of borrowed parentage were too palpable in some instances the other evening to escape the general notice. "Dear, dear, what can the matter be!" was the unconscious tune of one of these despairing efforts to work out a new idea, the spears of masquerading matadors helping the while to drum it out upon the floor.

The plot of *La Traviata* is that of the play "Camille." We have given descriptions of it ere now. As to its musical contents, the critic of the *Courier* has had the courage, which we had not, to look through the score, and gives us a fair sketch thereof, which we have copied on another page. We fully agree with him—we believe all agree—that it is the weakest of Verdi's operas. It saves itself in Paris, London, &c., by the acting and the singing of the Piccolomini, of Bosio, and other captivating artists in the heroine's part; as it has done in Philadelphia and New York, and now finally in Boston, by the lyric powers of Mme. GAZZANIGA.

This fresh, blonde, lady-like and earnest prima donna answers well in quality, if not in degree, to the reports which we have copied of her. Her charm is unique; we do not think of one with whom to compare her. It resides in person—a face, not beautiful, but winning and expressive, a figure light, symmetrical and graceful; in voice—remarkably fresh, clear and searching, for the most part sweet withal, though inclining to screamy in high energetic passages, but of a reedy richness in the low tones, barely above mezzo soprano in compass; but above all in genuine abandon and naturalness of action. Her impersonation is eminently dramatic, rising at times to great power. In the last scene her action was comparable to Miss Heron's. Her intensity is tempered by good taste. Her gift is that of the lyric actress. As a vocalist she certainly has small claims; she rarely sings false, and with a sort of instinct and true fervor seizes the character of the music; but there is no finely finished vocalization; her scales are indicated rather than sung, and so too all the fine embellishments. But she has that power of throwing passion into a note, of coloring a tone, that never-failing verve and freshness, that show, to use a homely phrase, she has it "in her." The cabaretta of her solo at the end of the first act: *Ah, forse è lui*, was evidently set down from the original key; she sang it perhaps as expressively as such mechanical music would admit, although the florid passages were slighted.

In the scene with the *père* Germont, and in the stormy one that follows, there were fine touches of lyric passion. But it was in the sick and dying scene, where the music too is somewhat better, that her best power shone out. The agony of that line: *Gran Dio! morir sì giovane!* (Great God! to die so young!) as twice she seemed to pour out her whole soul in it, was thrilling. In the duet: *Parigi, O cara*, which is the most interesting *morceau* of the play, a duet, however, on Verdi's old model of the one in *Ernani*, and again in *Trovatore*, her voice blended sympathetically and sweetly with that of BRIGNOLI, whose tenor is as musical as ever, and who generally sang well and alive when his part called him into the foreground, and then relapsed into the old indifference.

Sig. AMODIO, with his fat figure, and stereotyped gesticulations, which seem to know only two phases of passion, those of very ordinary love-making and revenge, made rather a droll caricature of the father. The grave, respectable old gentleman seemed making love, where he had come to read a lecture and to rescue from a syren. His facile and correct delivery, and the way in which he pours himself out, a tun of voice, round, full and heavy, frequently brings down the house. In concerted pieces his baritone tells nobly; but we cannot wholly sympathize with the common admiration of that voice; we find in it little of sweetness or of sentiment; the quality is coarse and animal; its weight, fluidity and volume are its conquering charm. Signors COLETTI, BARATTINI, and the rest, did their parts creditably. The choruses were rather coarsely sung, and the orchestra too often brayed with brassy lungs, as if to hide the emptiness of the music. MAREZEK is still the same vigorous and alert conductor, and holds his forces well together. There is one *ensemble* piece, at the end of the second act, which is very effective, only not new after one has heard *Ernani*.

The second opera, of course, was *Trovatore*, in which ADELAIDE PHILLIPS charmed more than ever by her noble contralto, her unaffected manner and her artistic, honest singing; in which Mme. GAZZANIGA gained new ground, although AMODIO seemed to cut the widest swath in public favor; and in which BRIGNOLI was hissed, not off the stage, but while off, (such height of courage have our habitués at length reached) for dodging the "encore swindle" (he having been sick the day before). Having been let out of his prison to receive applause(!), and then remanded, he chose not to sing again the air with the guitar; and after that, as often as he "oped his mouth," although to sing his best, some greeted him with hisses, even to the sacrifice of the fine points of Gazzaniga. These were as uniformly drowned by storms of applause, and the play went through. We think an audience has only itself to blame, if it get not a good answer to all its unreasonable demands. The *Trovatore* had, of course, a very large and delighted public. For last night *Lucrezia Borgia* was announced; and this afternoon Miss PHILLIPS sings in music worthy of her, in Rossini's "Barber of Seville."

New Publications.

(From Oliver Ditson & Co.)

Twelve German Chorals, as harmonized by J. SEBASTIAN BACH. Now complete in 22 pages; price \$1 00.

We would we could persuade our choirs and choral societies, and "Normal Schools" of the satisfaction and sure profit they would find in frequent practice of these incomparable master-pieces of four-part writing. The beauty and religious purity and depth of feeling of these old German tunes, as Bach has harmonized them, must grow upon any one who has any sensibility or depth of nature. Even as sung by a quartet of voices, or only played over on the organ or piano, their charm is inexhaustible; but with a large choir, a "Handel and Haydn" chorus, their effect must be sublime. They ought to be in such general demand, as to warrant the enterprising publishers in issuing many more of the three hundred and odd chorals left in this form by Bach. Each tune here has appropriate English words, and bears its original German title, that is, the first line of the old hymn by which it is known in German churches.

Selections from COSTA's Oratorio: "Eli."—Two

more numbers. 1. *I will extol thee, O Lord*, is that brilliant soprano air, which reminds one somewhat of Handel's *Rejoice greatly*, only less full of old-fashioned roudades. There is a high B flat in it to be sustained through a couple of bars. 2. Chorus of Angels: *No evil shall befall thee*, &c. This is one of those soft and gentle choruses in which Costa has so clearly imitated Mendelssohn's "Blessed are they," "He watching over Israel," &c. Prices 25 and 20 cts.

Wayside Flowers of France and Italy. Translated and adapted by THEO. T. BARKER.

A series of the simpler little songs of recent French and Italian composers, some comparatively but little known in these parts, and some world-famous. We would rather take our chance among them, than among the more ambitious "gems" of opera; there is often character and freshness in these little things. Of sixteen numbers promised we have four: 1. *Petit Fleur des Bois*, by F. MASINI, a simple, pretty Allegretto; 2. *La Camelia*, by GUGLIELMO; 3. *Il Tempo passato*, (Departed days), a slow minor melody, of considerable pathos; and 4. *La Venta*, (Muleteer's Song), by HALEVY. A very pleasant variety already, and all within easy range of voice. Price of each song 25 cts.

"Florence." A collection of Songs, by F. BOOTT. 1. *I am weary with rowing*. 2. *Battle of the Baltic*: words by Campbell. 3. *From the close shut window*, (J. R. Lowell). 4. *The Sands o' Dee*, (Kingsley's "Alton Locke.") 5. *The night is calm and cloudless*, (Longfellow). 6. *Stars of the summer night*, (Ditto). 7. *Ring out, wild bells*, (Tennyson). 8. *Break, break, on thy cold grey stones, O sea*, (Ditto). 25 cts. each.

"Florence" is the publisher's fanciful and not inappropriate title to this series of some of the shorter flights of our townsman, who has for years dwelt in the atmosphere of song in Florence. The subjects are happily chosen, the melodies for the most part natural and appropriate, the accompaniments simple and effective. If not strikingly original or imaginative, they are very graceful, facile little songs, and have some of the best elements of popularity. Certainly they are very far to be preferred to some of the sweetish, sentimental productions of the day, which sell by tens of thousands, and are famous. It is the intention of the publisher to put together the eight songs, with possibly a few more, in a neat brochure, which will be quite acceptable to Mr. Boott's many friends.

Nacqui all'affanno, and Non piu mesta, by ROSSINI. (Pp. 11. Price 50 cts.) The famous exceedingly florid and elegant Introduction and Rondo from *Cenerentola*, in which Alboni, D'Angri, Adelaide Phillips, and others, have charmed so many audiences. This seems to be an accurate and complete copy.

Ah! forse è lui, (with also English words), from VERDI's *La Traviata*, (pp. 13, 75 cts). This comprises the introductory recitative, the Andantino air, and brilliant Cabaletta, with soprano at the end of the first act. It is here in the original key, running up to D flat above the staff, and is sufficiently Verdisch, requiring a singer trained to difficult vocal feats. The performance of the *Traviata* here this week will provoke not a few to try it.

Six Songs, by JULES SCHULHOFF. Judging from these two: *Star of my love*, and *Bright land of Bohemia*, the bravura pianist has not the gift of song, beyond quite common-place and sentimental melody. So much the more likely, we suppose, are they to please the many; besides, they are very easy.

Six Lieder ohne Worte, (Six Songs without words), by MENDELSSOHN. Arranged for four hands, by CZERNY. In 7 Books. Book I. Pp. 23.

Ditson's edition of the *Lieder*, &c., in the original form for two hands, has for some years been among the easily accessible treasures of pianists in this country. We now have the first set of six of them, conveniently arranged for two performers, bringing

them within the reach of more limited powers of execution; so that the poetic character and expression of each little piece may be studied and realized with less thought of mere technical requirements.

Six Lieder de SCHUBERT; transcribed for piano by STEPHEN HELLER. No. 3. *La Voyageur*; No. 4. *La Barcarole*. Pp. 7 and 9.

These transcriptions are not immensely difficult, like those by Liszt. They simply bring all the essential features of both melody and accompaniment, of these wondrous Schubert songs, within the grasp of an ordinary pianist's two hands. That the work is artistically and truly done, the name of Stephen Heller is sufficient guaranty.

Musical Intelligence.

London.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—The old story; Verdi rules the day; and the *Musical World* of May 16th, reports a week's work briefly thus:

Rigoletto was repeated on Saturday, and Mad. Bosio renewed her triumph of the preceding Thursday.

On Tuesday *Lucrezia Borgia*, and on Thursday (*La Traviata* being postponed, in consequence of the indisposition of Sig. Graziani) *Rigoletto* was given for the third time.

To-night *La Traviata*, with Mad. Bosio and Mario as the heroine and hero.

The debut of Mlle. Balfé is postponed to the 28th.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—On Saturday, May 9, *Lucia* was repeated. Sig. GIUGLINI "gains new adherents nightly," and the *Musical World* says:

Mlle. PICCOLOMINI, by her performance of *Lucia*, must have satisfied the most doubting that she is not the parrot some of her disbelievers would make her out. She has not yet surmounted the obstacles presented in the opening cavatina and the last movement of the mad scene; but we have faith in her, and believe her capable of any effort to acquire perfection in her art.

The event of the following week was the return of ALBONI, who made her first appearance in *Il Barbiere*, with Herr Reichardt as Almaviva, who though a German tenor, is pronounced an admirable florid singer; Sig. Pelletti as Figaro; Beneventano, Doctor Bartolo; and Violetti, Don Basilio.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The programme of the third concert was a splendid one, to-wit:

PART I.	
Sinfonia in A minor, No. 3.....	Mendelssohn.
Aria, "Zeffiretti lusinghieri," Madama Novello (Edmondo).....	Mozart.
Overture in D major.....	J. S. Bach.
Concerto, pianoforte, in G, Herr Rubinstein.....	Rubinstein.
PART II.	
Sinfonia in F, No. 8.....	Beethoven.
Aria, Mme. Novello (Iphigénie en Tauride).....	Gluck.
Solos, pianoforte, Herr Rubinstein.....	Rubinstein.
Overture (Berg-geist).....	Spohr.
Conductor—Professor Sterndale Bennett.	

The critic of the *Times*, however, condemns Herr Rubinstein, who had just before created a Parisian "sensation," in the following strong language, which we quote to show how judgments differ:

So strange and chaotic a jumble as the concerto in G defies analysis. To assert that it is wanting in intelligible design would be insufficient, since not only is there no evidence of development but nothing to develop. Not a single subject, fit to be designated "phrase" or "melody," can be traced throughout the whole dreary length of the composition; while, to atone for the absence of every musical attribute, we look in vain even for what abounds in the pianoforte writings of Liszt and others of the same eccentric school—viz., the materials for displaying mechanical facility to advantage. Herr Rubinstein's concerto, in short, is quite as dull as it is shapeless and confused. The orchestral accompaniments, moreover, betray the hand of a tyro; anything more meagre and unsatisfactory has rarely been committed to paper. The two pieces without accompaniments which the Russian pianist introduced in the second part of the programme—a nocturne and a *Polonaise*—are not much better. In the first something like the shadow of a theme is indicated; but the last is empty rhodomontade from end to end. Such things have nothing whatever to do with music; and the wonder is how so beautiful an art can, under any circumstances, be exhibited in a light so unattractive and absurd. As a player, Herr Rubinstein (who, when a mere boy, paid London a visit in 1843-4) may lay claim to the possession of extraordinary manual dexterity. His execution (more particularly when he has passages in octaves to perform) is prodigious, and the difficulties he surmounts with apparent ease are manifold and astonishing. But his mechanism is by no means invariably pure;

nor is his manner of attacking the notes at all favorable to the production of legitimate tone. A pianist should treat his instrument rather as a friend than as an enemy, caress rather than bully it; but Herr Rubinstein seats himself at the piano with a seeming determination to punish it, and his endeavors to extort the power of an orchestra from that which is, after all, but an unpretending row of keys, hammers, and strings, result in an exaggeration of style entirely antagonistic to real musical expression.

Musical Chat-Chat.

The stock-holders of the Boston Music Hall had their fifth annual meeting on Wednesday. The receipts of the Hall for the year past were found to be \$8976 56; the expenditures, (including some \$600 for permanent improvements), \$5170 80; to which has to be added interest on debt, \$2400, leaving a clear profit of \$1405 76. The debt, originally \$45,000, stands where it did last year, at \$40,000. The stock is now represented by 1011 shares. The old Directors were re-elected, viz.: Dr. J. B. Upham (President), J. M. Fessenden, C. C. Perkins, H. W. Pickering, Dr. George Derby, E. D. Brigham, and Eben Dale. . . . The article on "Musical Festivities," in our last number, should have been credited to the *Courier*. . . . Sig. CORELLI sails for Italy on Wednesday, having sent a large musical instrument before him, and leaving behind a patriotic Card, which will be found below. A pleasant journey to him, and a safe return to Boston in October!

The German Opera at the Philadelphia Academy, opened on Monday evening with the *Freyschutz*, and not with *Martha*, as at first announced. *Fidelio* and Auber's "Mason and Locksmith" followed. A friend in Philadelphia writes: "You have much to regret in not having visited our Academy of Music during the long season it has been enjoying. You will not find GAZZANIGA a fine vocalist, by any means, but you will recognize in her a great genius, a lyrical Rachel—who in Verdi's *Traviata* will give a new reading to a character which has already excited a world-wide interest. It is a somewhat remarkable circumstance, that during the forty-three opera nights at the Academy, there has not been one case of 'indisposition,' not a single change of programme. To balance this, it is true, we have had two unequivocal fiascos—a soprano and a tenor—Madame dePaez and Signor Giannoni, each of whom sang once, and once only. The newspapers give you no idea of the enthusiasm and splendor of the audiences; strange to say, all descriptions have fallen short of the reality, excepting Fry's editorial in the *N. Y. Tribune*, which was almost too much on the other side. Nor can you form any conception of the wonderful favoritism achieved by Gazzaniga; never was an artist more popular in our dull city; her every appearance has been a triumph, and on her two benefit nights she literally had a flowery path across the stage." . . . The Foyer of the Philadelphia Academy is to be adorned with a marble bust of Mme. Gazzaniga, by some of her admirers, she having so identified herself with its inauguration and first brilliant season. This is said to be in imitation of the enthusiasm which has placed the bust of Malibran in La Scala, and of Rachel in the Théâtre Français. . . . To-day the Great National Musical Festival of the Germans will commence at Philadelphia. The total number of singing societies which will participate will be 54, embracing 1505 members. The societies are from the following cities and boroughs: New York, 17—650 members; Philadelphia, 12—334 members; Baltimore, 8—215 members. One society from each of the following: Alexandria, Boston, Brooklyn, Easton, Harrisburg, Hoboken, Hartford, New Haven, Reading, Richmond, Trenton, Washington, and Wilmington. From Williamsburg and Newark, 2 each.

Our Boston prima donna, ELISE HENSLE, is still in Paris, where she sang not long since in the con-

cert of M. Nicosia, a famous Sicilian violinist. We translate from a French review:

"We admired at this concert a large and beautiful young lady, Mlle. Hensler, an American, who dresses like a Parisienne, pronounces like a Siennese, and sings like a Neapolitane. She sang the air from *Rigoletto*—that air so beautiful, so melodious, but so difficult, and the cavatina from *I Puritani*. She sang these two pieces with exquisite taste, with unimpeachable precision, and above all with an immense success. She was applauded, she was recalled, and recalled again; everybody asked who this young cantatrice was, whom America had sent us in exchange for the great artists whom she demands of the first lyric theatres upon our continent." . . . Brussels papers report the fine impression made upon a great audience by our young Boston violinist, Mr. J. P. GROVES, at the last concert of the Conservatoire, (over which M. Fétis presides), of which he is one of the most promising pupils. The programme of this concert consisted of a MS. Symphony, by Ferdinand Hiller, the overture and entr'actes to Meyerbeer's *Struensee*, solos, &c. We translate from two of them:

"A young Bostonian, who presented the Anglo-American type strongly pronounced, executed the first part of the first violin Concerto by Vieuxtemps. Mr. Groves is a pupil of M. Léonard, and pupil and master achieved a grand success for one another. It seemed audacious for a young man to attack one of the most difficult pieces for the violin; but Mr. Groves soon showed that he was equal to his terrible task. He places his bow with a remarkable certainty, and executes full and vigorous passages with the boldest manner. The bow bites the strings, making them resound with amplitude and power, or sets them vibrating with a prodigious rapidity. Mr. Groves executes wonders with the left hand, while the right details and brilliantly accentuates the melody. Here is a young artist with a fair future before him."—*Le Moniteur Belge*.

"Mr. Groves, a second prize violin of the class of Mr. Léonard, was warmly applauded and even recalled,—a thing which does not happen at the concerts of the Conservatoire as often as it does elsewhere. . . . The young virtuoso showed remarkable qualities of mechanism, and a certain energy of execution which augur well for his future."—*Le National*.

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A CARD.—Signor CORELLI begs leave to offer his thanks to those generous friends of Italy who have enabled him, by their contributions, to present an American cannon to the fortress of Alexandria. He assures them that their gift is already on its way, and will soon be welcomed upon the frontier citadel of his country, as the tribute of the friends of constitutional liberty in the new world to the defenders of constitutional government in the old.

It will be the novel office of this cannon to announce, on the borders of the most despotic states of Europe, that the citizens of a democratic republic, can appreciate and encourage a constitutional monarchy, and that in the patriotic exertions of Victor Emanuel and of the Count Cavour, they can recognize the fact that a monarch and his enlightened minister may be the best guardians of the happiness, the good order and the liberty of Northern Italy. In the present threatening attitude of the old despotisms to Sardinia, its citizens will understand and cherish the sympathy of the young Republic, with its well regulated institutions, in the stability of which is the only present hope of freedom for Italy.

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